
HOUSEHOLD AND NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA



Edited by

Godfrey D. Mudimu & Richard H. Bernstein

University of Zimbabwe UZ/MSU Food Research in Southern Africa

HOUSEHOLD AND NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

Edited by
Godfrey Mudimu
Richard H. Bernstein

UZ/MSU Food Security Research in Southern Africa Project
Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension
University of Zimbabwe
P.O. Box MP 167,
Harare, Zimbabwe
Telex 4152 ZW
Telephone 303211 Extension 1516

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	v
Acknowledgements	vii

OFFICIAL OPENING:

FAMILY HEALTH AND FOOD SECURITY Professor W.J. Kamba	3
ECONOMIC POLICY REFORM AGENDA FOR AFRICA B.T.G. Chidzero	7

SECTION 1: SADCC'S FOOD SECURITY PROGRAMME

SADCC'S EVOLVING FOOD SECURITY PROGRAMME K.J.B. Dhliwayo	15
---	----

SECTION 2: IMPACT OF MARKET REFORM ON FOOD SECURITY

IMPACT OF MARKET LIBERALISATION ON HOUSEHOLD FOOD SECURITY IN TANZANIA H.K.R. Amani, S.M. Kipunda, N.H.I. Lipumba, and B.J. Ndulu	29
IMPACT OF MARKET REFORMS ON HOUSEHOLD FOOD SECURITY IN RURAL MALAWI B.M. Kaluwa and B.F. Kandoole	45
AGRICULTURAL POLICY AND ITS IMPACT ON FOOD SECURITY: THE ZAMBIAN CASE K.F. Sipula, J.T. Milimo, C. Mliwa, and D. Mendamenda	63

FOREWORD

In 1985 the University of Zimbabwe and Michigan State University initiated a Food Security Research Network for Southern Africa. The objectives of the network are to conduct research that informs policymakers about food security issues and to help strengthen the regional capacity for food policy analysis. The underlying premise of the network is that building excellence in research capacity for national policy analysis comes through experience. In practice, this requires a long-term commitment to analytical capacity building, consistency in funding, and constant interaction between researchers and policymakers.

The network has sponsored four annual conferences for network researchers, policymakers, SADCC officials, and representative of international and donor agencies. The aim of the conference is to share research findings, identify new research themes, and provide an opportunity for policy dialogue between regional researchers, policymakers, and government officials.

The 1988 conference brought together 110 participants who deliberated on 28 papers. In the Official Opening, Vice-Chancellor W.J. Kamba of the University of Zimbabwe highlighted the importance of including health related-issues as a component of food security; and Zimbabwe's Senior Minister of Finance, Economic Planning, and Development B.T.G. Chidzero outlined policy reform priorities for Southern Africa. Subsequent sessions focused on *SADCC's Food Security Programme, the Impact of Market Reform on Food Security, Food Security Policy Options, New Technology to Improve Food Security, Family Food Security Options in Low-Rainfall Areas, Expanding Agricultural Trade in the SADCC Region, Nutrition and Food Security, the Contribution of Small-Scale Rural Enterprises to Employment Generation and Food Security, and the Impact of Irrigation on Food Security*.

A highlight of the 1988 conference was the participation of five nutritionists from Zambia, Zimbabwe, Sweden, and the United States. The presence of the nutritionists stimulated formal and informal discussions on the food access side of the food security equation and drew attention to the need to initiate more research in this area.

A second highlight of the 1988 conference was the attention given to reducing barriers to expanded intraregional trade in the SADCC region. Results presented suggest that there appear to be substantial price and nonprice barriers to expanded trade. Nevertheless, there exist significant opportunities for expanding intraregional trade that can be realized through appropriate government initiatives.

This proceeding contains revised papers prepared under the sponsorship of the University of Zimbabwe/Michigan State University Food Security Research Project in Southern Africa and presented at the University of Zimbabwe's Fourth Annual Conference on Food Security Research in Southern Africa, held at the Holiday Inn, Harare, October 31-November 3, 1988.

Godfrey Mudimu and Richard H. Bernstein
Co-Directors
UZ/MSU Food Security Research Project
University of Zimbabwe

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Fourth Annual Conference on Food Security Research in Southern Africa provided an opportunity for regional researchers, policymakers, government officials, private sector participants, and donor representatives to share research results and experiences in improving food security in Southern Africa. The studies reported in the proceedings are part of a larger cooperative agreement project on food security in Sub-Saharan Africa that is directed by Michael Weber of Michigan State University's Department of Agricultural Economics. The UZ/MSU Food Security Research Programme is being carried out in conjunction with the Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension, University of Zimbabwe.

Many individuals and institutions have contributed to making the conference a success. We extend our gratitude to the authors of the research papers for their intellectual contributions to the debate on improving food security in Southern Africa; and to the policymakers, private sector participants, government officials, and donor representatives for attending the conference and sharing their insights on the critical issues raised.

The Food Security Research Project has benefitted from the generous support of Sam Muchena and John Dhliwayo, of the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, and Rural Resettlement (Zimbabwe). In their roles as leaders of SADCC's Food Security Administrative and Technical Unit, they have been particularly helpful in planning the annual conference and identifying relevant research themes that complement SADCC's Food Security Programme.

The Food Security Research Project is financed by the U.S. Agency for International Development, Bureau of Science and Technology; Bureau for Africa; and the Southern Africa Regional Programme; under a *Food Security in Africa* cooperative agreement (DAN-1190-A-00-4092-00) with the Department of Agricultural Economics, Michigan State University and Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension, University of Zimbabwe. We are particularly appreciative of the support we have received from USAID officials, including Allison Herrick, Eric Witt, Joshua Mushuari, Doug Pickett, and Brad Wallach of USAID/Zimbabwe; and our Washington-based project managers, Michael Yates (Science and Technology) and Patricia O'Brien (Africa Bureau).

We convey our appreciation to Thembi Sibanda and Murie Hutchison for an excellent job in organizing the Fourth Annual Conference, and to the numerous individuals who helped to make the conference a success: Lovemore Nyabako, Maxwell Chiwashira, Sampson Maguhudze, George Nyamatemba, Ronald Sagwete, Pete Hopkins, and Andrew Barnes.

We are especially indebted to Corinne Smith for her patience, skill, and dedication in word processing the proceedings--and to her husband, Lionel, for his assistance in solving software problems. Their team effort has made this publication possible.

Finally, we thank Chris Wolf and Elizabeth Bartilson for providing software support.

SADCC'S FOOD SECURITY PROGRAMME

SADCC'S EVOLVING FOOD SECURITY PROGRAMME

K. John M. Dhlwayo¹

INTRODUCTION

FOOD SECURITY SITUATION IN SADCC

Despite the limitations of available data, it is clear that the food security problem in SADCC and in Africa is generally substantial. Assessments by the World Bank show that the food insecure are not confined to any one group or type of countries.

The Bank's estimates indicated that between 24-50% of the population in five SADCC countries are food insecure². In three countries--Zambia, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe--nearly one-half of the population is estimated to be food insecure. This situation exists, despite the substantial staple grain surpluses produced in Zimbabwe in recent years.

AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY

Agriculture is important as a vehicle for addressing food security problems for at least two reasons. First, in SADCC agriculture remains the mainstay of the regional economy, contributing about 34% of the region's GDP, employing about 79% of the total labour force, and contributing about 26% of the total foreign currency earnings. Stimulating agricultural growth will therefore be the major instrument for increasing national and household incomes, with which food can be imported and bought domestically.

Second, in most SADCC countries, agriculture is the principal way of ensuring food availability. The largest group of people in SADCC who suffer food insecurity are the rural poor, who have insufficient land and other resources to provide sufficient income or food.

Such people typically live in drought-prone areas, in areas of high population density, and often have female heads of households with inadequate land and capital resources.

Increased food production by such people will often be the only way to increase their food security in the medium term, since alternative employment will not be readily forthcoming and dependence on food aid is unpredictable for more than the short term.

Agriculture can thus contribute to overcoming the food security problem through:
o growth that distributes its benefits as widely as possible; and

¹Sector Coordinator, Food Security Technical and Administrative Unit, SADCC.

²Report of the Task Force on Food Security in Africa, World Bank, June 30, 1988.

- o increased food production by the rural poor.

With this background highlighting the fundamental role of agriculture in improving food security, it is not surprising that SADCC has established seven separate interrelated areas for cooperation within its Food Agriculture and Natural Resources programme.

- o Agricultural Research and Training (coordinated by Botswana);
- o Livestock Production and Animal Disease Control (Botswana);
- o Fisheries, Forestry, and Wildlife (Malawi);
- o Soil and Water Conservation and Land Utilization (Lesotho); and
- o Food Security (Zimbabwe).

Within the Food Security Programme, much of the thrust of the regional food security projects is directed at improving the availability side of the food security equation.

FOOD SECURITY PROGRAMME REVIEW

Objectives

The overall objective of the SADCC Food Security Programme is to increase agricultural production so that the region can become self-sufficient in its basic food needs. Within this broad aim, three objectives are to:

- o satisfy the basic food needs of the whole population of the region, and progressively to improve food supplies to the people—irrespective of their specific economic situation or position in society;
- o achieve national and regional self-sufficiency in food supply to the maximum extent possible, in order to reduce the region's dependence on external sources of supply; and
- o eliminate the periodic food crises which affect areas or countries in the region.

Strategy

The original emphasis of the sector's strategy focused on assisting member states to increase food availability through increasing domestic production, reducing post-harvest losses, and expanding grain storage. This thrust is being continued. However, the current strategy also recognizes that increasing food production and efforts toward national self-sufficiency *per se*, will not automatically end hunger and malnutrition. The strategy, therefore, aims to increase household, national, and regional food security by encouraging activities that will enhance the ability of all people to acquire an adequate diet.

The strategy emphasizes the importance of increasing food production in food deficit member states. It also emphasizes the need to give first priority to helping increase food production in these countries; and to support agricultural diversification projects in food surplus countries.

The principal elements of the strategy are to:

- o develop mechanisms for the exchange of information;
- o reinforce national food production capacity;

- o develop intraregional trade in food and other crops;
- o improve food storage, delivery, conservation, and processing;
- o improve seed production and the supply of major food crops in the region;
- o develop cash crops and other agricultural enterprises;
- o establish systems for the prevention of food crises and develop national food security strategies;
- o improve regional food security through effective exploitation of the region's extensive irrigation potential;
- o establish programmes for the control of major crop pests and diseases; and
- o develop skilled manpower.

Implementation

The Food Security Programme is being implemented through 13 interlinked regional projects and a series of other projects which, though national in character, when taken together contribute significantly to the achievements of SADCC's overall food security objectives.

During 1988, the programme at the regional level has concentrated on consolidating progress in the development of the programme's regional projects.

Food Reserve Project

Given the priority accorded in the sector's strategy to establishing systems to prevent food crises and enhance intraregional trade, major emphasis has been given to bringing the Regional Food Reserve Project (FRP) to the stage where it is ready for implementation.

The Council of Ministers reaffirmed its support for the project and approved the *Project Implementation Memorandum* as its meeting in January, 1988. A special working session was held at the 1988 *Annual Consultative Conference* to present the project to cooperating partners. The session was followed by a series of meetings with most of those partners who expressed interest in the project.

Cooperating partners have indicated general support for the concept of the project, and specific support for the management coordination team and for the training component. There is also support for the food aid component. The first grain donation made to the project has been received from Argentina. However, some cooperating partners have raised issues in connection with both the administration and pricing of the food aid component and the contributions by member states to project costs.

After extensive discussions within SADCC, the project has been revised to allow for a rescheduling of the implementation programme to take account of the views of SADCC's partners. Under the revised proposal, SADCC's assertion of full administrative control over the food aid component will be postponed until the database and operational capacity of the reserve's management has been established.

* A special meeting of senior SADCC officials in September 1988 recommended implementation of the revised project. Work has started to consolidate funding.

Early Warning System for Food Security

This project is now fully operational, although counterpart staff to the FAO experts still need to be recruited in some posts in some national early warning units. Information is flowing regularly between the national units and the regional unit. Three quarterly *Food Security Bulletins* have been released, with the fourth expected in October, 1988.

A fully operational national unit has been established in Angola with financial assistance provided by the OAU which has also provided funds to meet the balance of local costs of the Regional Early Warning Unit during its three-year establishment phase.

Regional Inventory of Agricultural Resource Base (RIARB)

This project has made significant progress in compiling an agricultural resource data and the designing computerised databases at the national and regional levels. Microcomputers with a range of appropriate software for use in compiling data for the inventory have been distributed to several member states.

A new project associated with the RIARB, for which the support of cooperating partners is sought, is concerned with completing the national soil survey in Zambia. The information to be obtained from the survey will be an essential input for the RIARB.

Regional Information System on Food Security (RIS)

A preliminary version of the Regional Information System on Food Security has been designed and a draft project proposal for implementing the first phase of the project has been prepared for approval by ministers of agriculture and natural resources in October. Cooperating partners are invited to support the implementation of this project.

Post-Production Food Industry Advisory Unit (PFIAU)

This project continues to assist member states to identify, design, and implement projects addressing the reduction of post-production losses in areas such as improved harvesting techniques, handling, storage, processing, and distribution. In addition to the further development of projects in 1987, the PFIAU has assisted with the development of a large-scale project to improve post-production systems in southern Tanzania. A pilot project to develop bunker storage for maize is also being developed in conjunction with the Grain Marketing Board in Zimbabwe.

Funding of the PFIAU and its core activities is available only up until the end of 1988. A tripartite evaluation of the project has recommended its continuation and a proposal for the five-year extension of the project, at an estimated cost of US\$3.6 million, is in preparation. Cooperating partners are invited to continue their support for this project.

Improving seed production capacity

One of the projects addressing that element of the strategy which deals with "reinforcement of national production capacity" has been a major study on the

production and supply of seed in the region. The study, which was completed in 1988, has identified 12 projects for improving the seed sector at the regional level and a number of areas for intervention at the national level. Four of the regional projects have been referred to SACCAR³ because of their implications for the region's agricultural research programme. Detailed project proposals are being developed by the study consultant for the eight other projects. After their approval by SADCC, cooperating partners will be invited to support these new projects.

Strengthening and coordination of migrant pest control

That element of the strategy dealing with establishing programmes for the control of major crop pests and diseases is being addressed by Project 1.0.13--strengthening and coordination of migrant pest control. An agreement with the Federal Republic of Germany on the initiation of a pre-implementation phase to design a long-term project to improve member states' capacity to deal with migrant pests, is expected to be concluded shortly.

Identification of new national projects

Work initiated in 1987 to identify new national projects for inclusion in the Food Security Programme and the review of national projects previously included, is continuing. However, progress has been slow. The Food Security Technical and Administrative Unit (FSTAU) is aware of project proposals in several member states which would lend themselves for inclusion in the Food Security Programme. The Unit, however, lacks the resources to provide assistance to member states to develop the proposals in accordance with the agreed SADCC format in order that they may be submitted for consideration and approval by SADCC. A proposal to expand FSTAU's resources to meet this need is being prepared as part of the proposals for continued funding of the Unit's activities.

SADCC's strategy for food, agriculture, and natural resources recognizes that women occupy a very central position in the production structures of member states, especially in rural peasant agriculture. In some member states, women constitute a majority of the rural labour force because men have left to seek employment in the urban areas or in South Africa. The Food Security Sector recognizes the need to give greater emphasis in the programme to the special need of women in the projects which are developed. Accordingly, negotiations are in progress with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) for support for the appointment to the FSTAU of a technical adviser to assist in addressing issues specifically relating to women in the development of projects. It is envisaged that this adviser will initially concentrate efforts in projects dealing with the post-production sector.

The review of the management structure and accounting systems of the FSTAU, commissioned by the Government of Zimbabwe in 1987, has been completed; and

³SACCAR, Southern Africa Centre for Cooperation in Agricultural Research, is responsible for assisting SADCC countries to strengthen their agricultural research capacity.

the report by the study consultant is now under consideration by government. The consultant has recommended a restructuring of the Unit from its present project team orientation into three sections: technical and economic planning; information; and finance and administration. The consultant has also recommended a significant increase in the allocation of both personnel and financial resources to the Unit. After decision by government on the report's recommendations, detailed proposals for continued funding of the Unit's activities will be prepared and submitted to cooperating partners.

STATUS OF REGIONAL PROJECTS⁴

Project 1.0.1: Technical Assistance Programme for Coordination and Cooperation

The project, funded by USAID, Australia, and Zimbabwe, provides financial and technical support for the processes of cooperation within SADCC on agrarian issues and assists Zimbabwe in planning, coordinating, and implementing the Food Security Programme. It also provides support for the overall coordination of SADCC's programmes in Food, Agriculture, and Natural Resources. A review by the Government of Zimbabwe of the FSTAU's management structure, accounting systems, and resource requirements is at an advanced stage. On its completion, the continued support of SADCC's cooperating partners for this core project will be sought.

Project 1.0.2: Regional Early Warning System for Food Security

The primary objective of this project, which is financed by Denmark, the OAU, and SADCC member states, is to provide advance information on food crop production and food supplies in the region so that member states can take action in the event of impending food shortages or surpluses. A Regional Early Warning Unit (REWU) has been established in Zimbabwe, and national early warning units have been established or strengthened in each member state. The REWU has published three quarterly bulletins on the food situation in the region since December 1987 and a fourth is expected in October 1988. A tripartite review by DANIDA, SADCC, and FAO is due to be conducted in October and November 1988 to review the work carried out so far and assess the need for further assistance.

Project 1.0.3: Regional Information System for Food Security

The project is concerned with establishing a regional information system (RIS) for food security planning. This involves developing national and regional databases on food production, trade in food commodities, and other socioeconomic indicators. During the project's pre-implementation phase, funded by UNDP, the nucleus of the Central Unit has been established, almost all SADCC countries have nominated a National Liaison Officer, and a preliminary design of the RIS has been submitted for

⁴Detailed documentation about each project is available from the Food Security Technical and Administrative Unit, Ministry of Lands, Agricultural and Rural Resettlement, Harare, Zimbabwe.

discussion. Essentially, a distributed information system has been proposed, with strong national modules linked to the Central Unit. The proposal also provides guidelines for database design, software and hardware acquisition, and personnel development--including a training programme to be executed at the national, regional, and extra-regional level. A project document for the implementation phase has been prepared. After its approval by SADCC, the approval of SADCC's cooperating partners will be sought to implement the project.

Project 1.0.4: Regional Inventory of Agriculture Resource Base

This project, which commenced implementation in 1985 with funding from the Republic of Ireland, involves establishing a standardized inventory of the region's agricultural resource base at both the national and regional level which can be used for land-use and other planning purposes. Correlation and standardization of data supplied by member states is being undertaken by the project's Central Unit based in Zimbabwe. Databases for the regional inventory (CARISA) and for the national inventory (NARISA) are being established. When completed, they will help to indicate the potential food production capacity of the region. Soil mapping units of the region have been correlated with the FAO soil legend and the USDA's soil taxonomy and the correlation of land-use patterns in the region is continuing. Two new programmes--SADCC Soil Fertility Analysis Services and SADCC Rangeland Management--and a soil survey project have been compiled and submitted for SADCC consideration. Additional funding of US\$50,000 is needed to enable the project to use remote-sensing technology to correlate land use patterns.

Project 1.0.5&9: Regional Food Reserve Project

A pre-feasibility study which commenced in 1983 was reported in 1984. A subsequent feasibility study in 1986 identified alternative management systems for a regional reserve. The selected system was examined at the feasibility level and a *Project Implementation Memorandum* has been approved by the SADCC Council of Ministers.

The project is now in the pre-implementation phase, pending confirmation of funding. Work has started to mobilize funding for the project management, a pre-implementation training study, and for the basic food aid needs. The EEC and other partners have indicated interest in providing financial support for the project management and training programmes, and also for part of the food aid required. However, interested partners have requested modifications in the detailed proposals for project implementation, mainly the food aid component, to comply with their own regulations.

The project document has been revised. On 21 September 1988, officials recommended to ministers that the project, as outlined in the revised document, is ready for implementation. Considerable additional funding will be needed to fulfil the basic project programme; and cooperating partners are invited to support the project.

Project 1.0.6&7: Regional Post Production Food Loss Reduction and Food Processing

This project is concerned with reducing post-production food losses in the region by encouraging the use of more efficient post-production operations and establishing rural facilities for the storage, preservation, processing, distribution, and marketing of food products. Implementation is coordinated by the Post-Production Food Industry Advisory Unit (PFIAU) whose basic strategy is to catalyse action in the post-production systems in member states and conducts workshops and seminars to identify potential areas of intervention. It assists member states to identify, initiate, and monitor projects on system improvement; and assist with obtaining funding support for their implementation. A number of projects to improve post-production systems are being implemented in Angola, Zambia, Lesotho, and Botswana. The PFIAU is funded under a grant from Canada until the end of 1988. A tripartite evaluation mission in 1988 recommended continuation of the project. A proposal for a five-year extension of the project at an estimated cost of US\$3.6 million is in preparation and, on its completion, cooperating partners will be invited to support the project.

1.0.8: Regional Food Marketing Infrastructure (study)

This study will (i) provide a basis for proposals to improve the capacity of the existing food marketing and distribution infrastructure in member states; and (ii) identify ways and means to improve the movement of commodities between member states.

The report of the study review, undertaken in 1987 and 1988, is being finalised by the FSTAU. Several areas for improving food marketing infrastructure at the national and regional levels have been identified and specific project proposals developed.

After finalising the proposals and they are approved by SADCC, the support of cooperating partners will be sought for implementing the project. Funding of US\$ 30,000 is also being sought to undertake a supplementary study in Angola which the study review could not cover because of logistical problems.

1.0.11: Regional Seed Production and Supply (study)

The objectives of this Danish-funded study are to analyse production, availability, and demand for improved seeds of the major food crops in member states; propose actions to alleviate constraints in the seed sector; and make recommendations on future regional cooperation in the sector. Field work was completed in 1987 and a workshop of SADCC technical experts to discuss the draft study report was held in April 1988. Twelve projects have been identified, four of which have been referred to SACCAR. Detailed project proposals are being developed by the study consultant for inclusion in the final report which is expected to be completed before the end of 1988. After approval of these projects by SADCC, the support of cooperating partners will be sought for project implementation.

1.0.12: Improved Irrigation in the SADCC Region (study)

The objective of this study is to identify appropriate ways by which SADCC can improve regional food security through more effective exploitation of the region's extensive irrigation potential. The study is expected to establish a strategy and programme of activities in the irrigation sector which can be implemented through the SADCC programme of action. Terms of reference for the study have been finalized and negotiations are proceeding with the Australian Government which has indicated its willingness to finance the study.

1.0.13: Strengthening and coordination of migrant pest control

The main objectives of this project are: to improve the capability of member states' ministries of agriculture to protect crops, particularly cereals, from losses caused by migratory pests such as grain-eating birds, African army worm, and locusts; and to develop an integrated regional approach to the control of migrant pests. An appraisal of the project by the Federal Republic of Germany's implementing agency, GTZ, recommended initiation of the project through a short-term pre-implementation phase at an estimated cost of DM1.0 million. Negotiations on the conclusion of an agreement relating to this phase are underway with the FRG.

NATIONAL PROJECTS

The SADCC Food Security Programme also comprise 23 national projects. These national projects with a regional impact reflect a similar concentration of emphasis on improvement to food availability, either through increased production, or improved marketing, storage, and distribution.

While not explicitly directed at improving food security, the production-enhancing objectives of the other sectors of the Food, Agriculture, and Natural Resources programme--particularly the sectors of Agricultural Research and Training, Livestock Production and Animal Disease Control, Fisheries, and Soil and Water Conservation and Land Utilization--are, by contributing to agricultural growth, also contributing to overcoming the food security problem.

However, actions to increase production and incomes in the agricultural sector, although of the highest priority, will not be enough to resolve the food security problem because (i) much of the growth that does occur as a result of initiatives in these sectors will benefit the medium and large producers and urban consumers and (ii) it does little to deal with food insecurity created by natural disaster (droughts, pest outbreaks) or man-made disaster (wars, civil strife).

MEASURES TO REDUCE FOOD INSECURITY

Chronic food insecurity is essentially an income problem and its ultimate solution lies in increasing incomes through broad-based economic development. Thus, there is a need for sound development policies, making necessary structural adjustments to the economy, and getting back on an economic growth path. Very often, what is good for economic growth is also good for food security.

However, it is recognized that reliance on economic growth alone will not be an adequate solution to the problem of food insecurity. There is need to complement economic growth initiatives with direct food security interventions. Economic growth alone may not directly and quickly reduce chronic food insecurity because:

- o Growth takes time and, and in the meantime, problems of food security may be so severe as to demand remedial action.
- o Benefits of economic growth don't always reach disadvantaged groups or less well endowment regions.
- o Some segments of society may not be able to participate in the benefits of growth.

The kinds of government inventions that are needed to enhance food security will include:

- o regular growth-promoting programmes which especially benefit the food insecure;
- o subsidy schemes (for production and consumption); and
- o policy actions aimed at relieving key constraints to achieving food security.

Interventions which can be pursued through explicit food security projects can include:

- o development of planning and implementing capacity for early warning of food problems;
- o specific interventions to help vulnerable rural households to produce food for themselves (e.g., distribution of seed, hand tools, extension);
- o development of agricultural research capacity for drought-resistant crops and improved cultivation techniques;
- o support for food-marketing and storage investments;
- o support for minimum food distribution and storage facilities;
- o specialized extension for women on food crop production;
- o nutrition and supplement programmes; and
- o policy changes--particularly pricing, land tenure, and market liberalization.

This list indicates that the opportunities to develop projects addressing the food insecure population are largely the prerogative of national governments. In recognizing this, SADCC is giving support to food deficit member states for production projects which do not necessarily have any direct impact on any other member state.

The problem in identifying suitable, cost-effective projects remains. It is here that SADCC has a role to play, particularly through exchanging information and sharing experiences.

Notwithstanding the urging by the SADCC Council of Ministers for including more "directly productive projects" in the Food, Agriculture and Natural Resource programme, the Food Security Sector has experienced difficulties in incorporating more of these national production projects that explicitly address the needs of the food insecure into the Food Security Programme.

Part of the difficulty could be due to a shortage of suitably-qualified personnel to develop appropriate project proposals. Through the activities of Project 1, the FSTAU is exploring ways of providing technical assistance to member states to

overcome such constraints. One element of the training programme under the Regional Food Reserve Project will also address this need.

On the other hand, since these types of projects are by their very nature, national in character, member states may feel more comfortable in seeking donor support for them on a bilateral basis, instead of submitting them to SADCC.

IDENTIFYING THE FOOD INSECURE

A fundamental problem remains--the identification of who the food insecure are, where they are located, how severely they are affected, and the causes of their food insecurity.

The Regional Information System and the Regional Early Warning System should go some way toward providing some of the answers. However, there is no single best indicator for measuring whether individuals or groups of people are adequately nourished. Results of any regional research into this fundamental question will be welcomed by the Food Security Programme.



This work is licensed under a
Creative Commons
Attribution – NonCommercial - NoDerivs 3.0 License.

To view a copy of the license please see:
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/>

This is a download from the BLDS Digital Library on OpenDocs
<http://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/>